

Particulate Matter 10 (PM10)

Particulate matter is the term used for solid or liquid particles found in the air.

PM10 refers to particles with a diameter of ten microns (one-millionth of a meter) or less. One thousand particles of this size could fit into the period at the end of this sentence.

PM10, also referred to as "coarse particulate", comes from a wide variety of stationary, mobile, and natural sources. For example, power production, cement manufacturing, combustion sources, fireplaces, diesel trucks, and forest fires are all sources of particulate emissions.

Exposure to PM10 may cause breathing difficulties due to damage and irritation of the lungs.

Children, the elderly, and those with cardiovascular or chronic lung diseases such as emphysema or asthma are especially sensitive to particulate matter pollution.

Air monitoring sites across the state measure the concentration of PM10 in the air. South Carolina currently meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for PM10.

This fact sheet is intended as a summary of issues related to PM10 and is not all-inclusive. To obtain additional information regarding particulate, you may contact the BAQ by phone at (803) 898-4123, access the bureau web page at <http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq>, or write to the following address:

*Bureau of Air Quality
S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201*